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THE *VERSUS INCONDITI* OF PAP. OXYRHYNCH. 219

BY HENRY W. PRESCOTT

In the second volume of the *Oxyrhynchus Papyri* (p. 39) Grenfell and Hunt published a "fragment from the end of a lament, apparently for the loss of a fighting-cock." The intelligible part of this fragment (vss. 13-24) I print below, with a critical apparatus. For convenience in the later discussion I have indicated the quantities of the syllables, admitting hiatuses wherever they are possible, and not attempting to mitigate the hiatus by crasis or semi-elision or total elision; this seems to be in accord with the intention of the author of the lament.

- 13 [. π] αῖδος ἔ[φ] ὕλασσεν ὃ φίλος μου Τρυφῶν
- 14 [. τε] κνον τηρῶν ἐν ταῖς ἀγκαλαῖς.
- 15 [ἀπόρο] υμᾶι ποῦ βᾶδισῶ. ἡ νᾶς μου ἐράγῃ.
- 16 [τὸν κ] ᾧ[τ] ᾧ[θ] ὕμιον ἀπολέσας ὀρνιν μου κλαῖω.
- 17 [. . . φ] ἔρε τὸ ὀρνιθοτροφῆν αὐτοῦ περὶ λαβῶ
- 18 τοῦ μ[ᾱχ] ἰμοῦ τοῦ ἐπεράστοῦ τοῦ Ἑλληνικῶν.
- 19 χαρ[ἰν τ] οὔτοῦ ἐκαλουμένην μέγας ἐν τῷ < ι > βῖω
- 20 καὶ [ἔλ] ἐγὼ μὴν μακάρι[ὁ]ς { ἀνδρες } ἐν τοῖς φίλοισι.
- 21 ψυχὸ μαχῶ. ὃ γὰρ ᾧ[λ] ἐκτῶρ ἡστοχῆκε μου
- 22 καὶ θακάθαλπαδος ἐρασθεῖς ἔμεν ἐνκατέλιπε.
- 23 ἀλλ ἐπιθεῖς λίθον ἐμαυτοῦ ἐπὶ τὴν καρδίαν
- 24 καθ[ἡ] σὺ χασόμεαι. ὕμε[ι]ς δ ὑγίαινετε φίλοι.

CRITICAL NOTES

The use of brackets corresponds to that of Grenfell and Hunt (cf. Vol. II, p. xi).

13. Τρυφών] cf. A. P. IX. 544. 1 (Crusius).

15. εραγη = ερραγη (G. H.).

16. ορνιν] ορνιθα Pap. ("ὄρνιν rhythmus suadet" Crusius). Perhaps ορνιθα. κλαιω] κλαιωι Pap. κλαίω; cf. Crönert *Archiv für Papyrussforsch.* I (1901), 519, n. 2.

17. ορνιθοτροφην] ἐρνιϝ[ν] τροφην Pap. (G. H.); ἐρκιον, τροφην Pap. (Crusius); ορνιθοτροφιν Wilamowitz *GGA.* (1900), 51; -ιν <-ιον (Dieterich *Untersuch. zur Gesch. d. gr. Spr.* 63–67), but -ίν does not develop from -εῖον (Dieterich *op. cit.* 66), so that Wilamowitz' reading is impossible. ὀρνιθοτροφῆν = ὀρνιθοτροφεῖον ("coop"); cf. ἐγμαγῆν, Ἰσιῆν, μελανθῆν, Σαραπιῆν (-ῆν = -εῖον) in the papyri as quoted in Mayser *Gram. d. gr. Papyri*, pp. 77, 78, and for ὀρνιθοτροφεῖον cf. Harpocration *s. v.* οἰκίσκῳ. περιλαβῶ] περιλαβῶι Pap.

20. {ανδρες} I have removed from the text. ανδρες Pap. ("ε in ανδρες is strangely formed and may be intended for ο." G. H.); ἀνδρος = "der metaplastische Nominativ," Wilamowitz (*op. cit.*) suggests, "nach Analogie der darauf ausgehenden Eigennamen." ἀνδράσιν τοῖς Crusius. φιλοτροφοῖς] Ludwich (*BPW.* [1900], 358, n. 1); φιλοτροφι Pap. ("There is a hole in the papyrus above the final ι . . . where the ο would have been, if it was written; i. φιλοτροφί[ο(ς)]." G. H.).

21. ψυχομαχῶ] ψυχομαχῶι Pap.

22. θακαθαλπαδος] θάκα for τάχα Blass; θακα Θαλπαδος (-ādos?) Wilamowitz; Θακοθαλπάδος Bechtel (*Hermes* 35 [1900], 348); cf. Herondas VII, 48; similarly Platt *Class. Rev.* XIV (1900), 19; Ταχυθαλπάδος ("quick-incubator"), Postgate *Class. Rev.* XIII (1899), 441; the proper name in each case is supposed to be that of a hen. εμεν]; cf. Dieterich *Untersuch. zur Gesch. d. gr. Spr.* 190 (G. H.).

23. εμᾶτον]; cf. Mayser *op. cit.*, p. 115.

Before taking up the question that chiefly concerns me, two matters of general interest that seem to have escaped notice may be briefly considered. This fragment of papyrus "was found with a number of documents dating from the earlier part of the [first] century (e. g., cclix, cclxxxv)." This statement of Grenfell and Hunt is rather vague; it seems not to have occurred to them that the name Τρύφων in 13 is a name that appears with remarkable frequency in the documents, mostly of an official nature, which they publish in this same volume (Nos. 235, 264, 267, 269, 273, 275, 276, 282, 288, 304, 306, 308, 310, 315, 316, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 324). In fact, from these documents Grenfell and Hunt have constructed a partial biography of Tryphon, the weaver (pp. 244 ff.). If our fragment was found with any of these documents, we should be interested to know it; for it becomes at once possible that we are scrutinizing the work of a local amateur, and not a "literary" papyrus. The obvious crudities in respect of hiatus, the "rohes Gemisch von Prosa und Dichtung, von Worten und Formen des gemeinen Lebens" (Crönert *Archiv für Papyrusforsch.* I [1901], 518), the "schnurrige Expektoration, das Sekundanerpathos eines halbgebildeten Bengels, der mit dem Weltschmerz spielt, . . ." (Wilamowitz *GGA.* [1900], 50) are immediately understood if a friend of Tryphon, the weaver, is the author of this lament, and the experiences and the emotions an autobiographical record.

Another bit of external evidence points to a provincial origin: for it is of Egyptian customs that Diodorus is speaking in the following passage (i. 74), pertinent to the interpretation of φιλοτρόφοι (20):

. . . . καὶ τὸ θαυμασιώτατον, διὰ τὴν ὑπερβολὴν τῆς εἰς ταῦτα σπουδῆς οἱ τε ὀρνιθοτρόφοι καὶ οἱ χηνοβοσκοὶ χωρὶς τῆς παρὰ τοῖς ἄλλοις ἀνθρώποις ἐκ φύσεως συντελουμένης γενέσεως τῶν εἰρημένων ζώων αὐτοὶ διὰ τῆς ἰδίας φιλοτεχνίας ἀμύθητον πλῆθος ὀρνέων ἀθροίζουσιν· οὐ γὰρ ἐπιάζουσι διὰ τῶν ὀρνίθων, ἀλλ' αὐτοὶ παραδόξως χειρουργοῦντες τῇ συνέσει καὶ φιλοτεχνίᾳ τῆς φυσικῆς ἐνεργείας οὐκ ἀπολείπονται.

The internal evidence certainly harmonizes with a theory that the composition is the work of a person who has little proficiency

in the technique of narration and description. His flowery language is in striking contrast to the rudeness of his sentence-structure: for the asyndeton may hardly be ascribed altogether to the emotional excitement of the sufferer. The figure in 15 is as discordant as the hiatuses in the same line. The poetry of ἀλιδρόσοις (in the unintelligible portion of the fragment which I have not printed) is at odds with the bald prose of ἐκαλούμην μέγας καὶ [ἐλ]εγόμεν μακάριος (19-20). The composition of a local amateur, not much above the social and intellectual level of his friend Tryphon, might naturally betray such crudities.

Grenfell and Hunt themselves suggest that the date of composition is not much earlier than that of the papyrus. They tell us that it is written in "a rough and rather difficult cursive hand of the earlier part of the first century." Of immediate interest are the following statements in their description:

Perhaps an attempt will be made to reduce the present composition to a metrical scheme, as has been effected by some critics in the case of the "Erotic Fragment." It is noticeable that the ends of the lines, so far as they are preserved, correspond with pauses in the sense, and that they are accordingly not quite uniform in length; and that in each line the penultimate syllable is, or may be, short.

Wilamowitz (*GG.A.* [1900], 50-51) declines to find verses in the fragment: "ich weiss dass Verse den Hiat vermeiden, . . . ; es giebt sich als einen Brief: warum sollen wir es nicht dafür halten?" It is a letter in prose addressed to the brethren of the speaker, members of a fraternity of ὀρυθοτρόφοι. But is there any evidence of a letter aside from ὑμεῖς δ' ὑγιαίνετε φίλοι (24)? And if the conclusion of a prologue of one of Plautus' comedies with its conventional *valete* were discovered under circumstances similar to those attending the discovery of our fragment, the suggestion that it was a fragment of a letter would not stand the test of time. Such a *valete* might appear in an environment not wholly free from hiatuses. Hiatuses may prevent lines from being poetry of a high order, but they certainly do not militate against the same lines being verses, at least from the composer's standpoint, especially if he be a friend and contemporary of

Tryphon, a weaver in Egypt in the first century A. D. One may hardly deny that the following are verses:

μή μου παρέλθης τὸ ἐπίγραμμα, ὀδοιπόρε,
 ἀλλὰ σταθεὶς ἄκουε καὶ μαθὼν ἄπι·
 οὐκ ἔστι ἐν Ἰδου πλοῖον, οὐ πορθμεὺς Χάρων,
 οὐκ Αἴακος κλειδοῦχος, οὐχὶ Κέρβερος κύων·
 5 ἡμεῖς δὲ πάντες οἱ κάτω τεθνηκότες
 ὁστέα, τέφρα γεγόναμεν ἄλλο δὲ οὐδὲ ἔν.
 εἴρηκα σοι ὀρθῶς· ὕπαγε, ὀδοιπόρε,
 μή καὶ τεθνακὼς ἀδ[ό]λεσχός σοι φανῶ.

(Kaibel *Epig. Gr.* 646.)

To be sure, the hiatuses here are to some degree apparent, not real: οὐδὲ ἔν is not genuine hiatus, ἐπίγραμμα ὀδοίπορε is perhaps only a case of elision that the stonemason did not indicate. But can there be any doubt that the composer meant vs. 7 to represent the metrical scheme: --|υ--|--|υυυ|υ--|υ--? Such epigrams, of course, are often only crude expansions, unintelligent modifications, of archetypes; so here the archetype of vss. 3-4 is suggested by Callimachus *Epigr.* xiii (Wil.), and the hypermetrical κύων (4) is an unintelligent addition to the type-form. But this does not warrant us in denying that the author considered the seventh line of the epigram an iambic trimeter in spite of the hiatuses. The hiatuses in this inscription may be due to Roman influence—for the inscription is on a Roman tombstone and not earlier than the third century A. D.; but perhaps the author of our own fragment was exposed to the same influence.

It is evident that the editors of the papyrus, and Wilamowitz, are waiting for others to rush in where they fear to tread.¹ I should be reluctant to take the fatal step if Crusius (*Herondae Mimambi*⁴, ed. minor, p. 123) had not declared that this lament is written in choriambo-cretic verse, with an admixture of bac-

¹For completeness, I add the comment of Crönert (*Archiv für Papyrusforsch.* I [1901], 518): "Die Worte sollen Versen darstellen, ein Paar Trimeter [he quotes 18-19], in denen aber weder Länge und Kürze noch auch Silbenzählung beobachtet wurde, auch ist der Hiat nicht anstössig."

chiuses and ditrochees! I quote his description in full: "fragmenti oratio certis colis discripta et paene ἔμμετρος; exitus ad unum omnes cretici vel paeonici (adpersis baccheis [21] et ditrochaeis), tetrametri fere mensuram explentes; schema hoc:

$$\begin{array}{c} \approx \approx \approx | \approx \sim \approx | \approx \approx \approx | \approx \sim \approx \\ \approx \approx | \approx \sim \approx | \approx \approx \approx | \approx \sim \approx \end{array}$$

ita vs. 13: xx-|vvv-|vvv-|vv-|, 15 vvv-|vv-|---|vv-|, 17 ---|vvv-|---|vvv-|, 21 vvv-|vvv-|---|vv-|. Hiatus et syllaba anceps in exitu versuum, post dimetrum prius (15. 20), pedem primum (21) et paenultimum (15; cf. 18 extr.), cetera crasi aphaeresi correptione (5. 24) procurantur." I have not the courage to attempt any refutation of this flexible metrical scheme. If I could prove that the author was a friend of Tryphon, the weaver, I should question his ability to conceive of or handle such a complicated bit of versification. As it is, it seems to me that such crudities of expression as are found in the fragment are somewhat out of keeping with choriambo-cretic verse. I should as soon expect a day-laborer to choose a triolet for his occasional verse as our author, with his hiatuses and grotesque discordances of style, to elect choriambo-cretics. I must leave the scheme of Crusius to some expert in the "new metric"; being only a reader of classical poetry I can simply set forth my own ideas of the structure with the faint hope that they may be worth considering.

I had not read over many lines of the fragment quantitatively (admitting the hiatuses) before I became conscious that the cadence was that of the senarii of Plautus' comedies. On writing out a metrical scheme in accordance with this feeling, I found that the lines readily conformed, with three exceptions—vss. 16, 17, 20. In vs. 16 ὀρνῖθᾶ refused to fit into a senarius; either the writer was guilty of a false quantity, ὀρνῖθᾶ (which might be applied in ὀρνυθοτροφήν in vs. 17 without spoiling the senarius)—and this is not impossible—or else he or the copyist intended to write ὀρνυ. In vs. 17 my trouble was with the deciphering of the papyrus by others: Grenfell and Hunt found the reading very difficult (ἐρρυ[ν] τροφήν); Crusius, apparently after inspect-

ing the papyrus himself, seemed confident of ἐρκίον, τροφήν—yet it was hardly conceivable that the coop (ἐρκίον) was called the cock's nourishment;¹ I allowed myself, therefore, a guess at the true reading, and conjectured ὀρνιθοτροφῆν, which may well have eluded the editors and Crusius because ὀρνιθοτροφῆν = ὀρνιθοτροφέιον had not occurred to their minds though well authenticated by the examples in Mayser, quoted above in the critical notes. The difficulty in vs. 20 was insuperable; any reasonable emendation resulted in a hypermetrical verse, but the removal of the somewhat dubious ἀνδρες made the verse at once metrical; obviously this is heroic treatment, and I do not mean that the composer did not intend ἀνδρες (or ἀνδράσι, if Crusius is right) to stand in the verse; at best these are *versus inconditi* and not to be scrutinized too closely. If my understanding of the meter appeals to others, a better suggestion may be forthcoming.²

The metrical scheme that results is in general accord with the Latin senarii of comedy:

13	x x	— — —	— —	— — —	— —	— —
14	x x	x x	— —	— —	— —	— —
15	— — —	— —	— — —	— —	— —	— —
16	— — —	— — —	— — —	— —	— —	— —
17	x — —	— —	— — —	— —	— — —	— —
18	— — —	— —	— — —	— —	— —	— —
19	— —	— —	— — —	— — —	— —	— —
20	— — —	— —	— — —	— —	— — —	— —
21	— — —	— — —	— —	— —	— —	— —
22	— — —	— — —	— —	— — —	— — —	— —
23	— — —	— — —	— —	— — —	— —	— —
24	— —	— — —	— —	— — —	— — —	— —

Not only do the quantities conform to the metrical scheme of the Latin senarius, but the general structure of the verses satis-

¹The latest report from Grenfell and Hunt (*Oxyrhynchus Papyri* IV, p. 261) is to this effect: "θ in place of ο is possible, but the first letter is more like ε than ο. The η of τροφήν is certain." If the first letter must be ε, we should probably look for some word referring to the cock's food, with which τροφήν might stand in apposition.

²The quantities in θακαθαλπάδος (22) are quite uncertain. It is not likely that Bechtel's Θακοθαλπάδος would fit into the verse; its long initial syllable would make the rest of the verse difficult to manage as a senarius. Perhaps θακα- is a case of shifting of aspirates, for τάχα- (cf. ἐνθαῦτα, κύθρα, etc., Mayser *op. cit.*, p. 184). Then we may have θάκα Θαλπάδος, or Θακαθαλπάδος in the sense of Postgate's Ταχυθαλπάδος. But even the quantity of the penultimate syllable is uncertain.

fies other reasonable tests. The iambus is regular in the sixth foot, and the spondee occurs in the fifth foot in two-thirds of the verses. The one iambus in the fifth foot (21) is part of a polysyllabic word; the monosyllabic ending of the same verse is an enclitic. The distribution of the short syllables of the dactyls and anapests corresponds in the main to the general practice of the comic writers in Greek and in Latin. The two short syllables do not belong to different words except in one case, π]αιδὸς ἐφύλασσειν (13). This division, not favored in Plautus,¹ occurs twelve times in Menander, and, with one exception, in the first foot (cf. White *Class. Phil.* IV [1909], 147, 149). In one other case (21) the dactyl is divided among three words; this Menander does freely (White *op. cit.* 149 and n. 1). The dactyl several times is contained in one word: twice it forms the beginning of a polysyllable (21, 22), three times the end of a polysyllable (16, 22, 24), once the middle of a polysyllabic word (17); there is no case of a dactylic word. Menander has no cases of the dactyl forming the conclusion of a polysyllable (White *op. cit.* 147), and only one in the middle of the polysyllable; similarly Aristophanes. These cases then are against my theory, but may be condoned in *versus inconditi*. Three of the four anapests form the beginning of polysyllables (15, 18, 19), one is an anapestic word (15): this accords with Menander's practice (White *op. cit.* 150). Two of the four tribrachs form the beginning of polysyllables (16, 20), one the middle of a polysyllable (24), one is divided among three words (13); this, again, corresponds to the treatment in Menander and Aristophanes (White *op. cit.* 142). The relation of dactyls to anapests is, of course, quite the opposite of the conditions in Menander's verse (White *op. cit.* 141); Menander favors the anapest; our author has five times as many dactyls as anapests; but in this regard Menander is not a fair standard of comparison, for he does not treat the even feet with the freedom available in the Latin senarius. I have no figures²

¹For similar imperfections in the *carmina epigraphica* cf. Hodgman, "The Versification of Latin Metrical Inscriptions," *Harv. Stud.* IX (1898), 138 ff.

²Except the statistics in Fay's *Mostellaria*, p. xvi, which show that the dactyls outnumber the anapests save in the first and fifth feet. It is clear that the number of

at hand for comparison with the Latin *senarius*, and must refer the reader to his own knowledge of the verses of Terence and Plautus.

But the reader may perhaps object to the frequency of the resolved feet, both in individual lines and in the fragment as a whole. It may be true that few passages of twelve consecutive verses in Plautus will show so many resolutions in separate verses. Isolated verses so freely handled are easily found: *Mercator* 247 (dactyls in first, second, fourth feet), 260 (dactyls in first, second, fourth, fifth feet), 314 (dactyls in first and third feet, tribrach in second, anapest in fifth), 330, 547, 565, 568, 576, 581, 681, 685, 709, etc. A passage like that of the *Mercator* 681 ff. is not essentially different in the kind and the number of resolutions from our verses:

disperii, perii misera, vae miserae mihi!
 # satin tu sana's, opsecro? quid eiulas?
 # Dorippa, mea Dorippa! # quid clamas, opsecro?¹
 # nescio quaest mulier intus hic in aedibus.
 # quid, mulier? # mulier meretrix. # veron serio?
 # nimium scis sapere ruri quae non manseris.

The succession of dactyls in individual verses (21, 22, 23, 24) has a parallel in such a verse as *Mercator* 260:

atque ego illi aspicio forma eximia mulierem.

The frequency of such resolutions in our papyrus may be due partly to the emotional condition of the speaker (similarly in *Merc.* 681 ff.), partly to the fact that these are perhaps the verses of a poetaster, not of a poet. The inexperienced versifier betrays himself chiefly in the freedom with which he introduces resolutions.

The Roman playwrights are very careful to observe caesural pauses in the *senarius*, and the penthemimeral pause is distinctly

dactyls resulting from my metrical interpretation is a serious obstacle to my theory. But, although in Plautus I should hardly expect to find a succession of seventy-two feet of which twenty were dactyls, it is certainly not difficult to find twelve successive verses in Plautus in which the number of dactyls runs up to sixteen, especially if words of the type *meas* are subject to iambic shortening rather than synizesis.

¹ This verse is quite uncertain, and the scansion as yet undetermined.

avored. Aristophanes, on the contrary, has little regard for such pauses. We hardly know whether or not to look for the caesural pause in these *versus inconditi*. If it is to be looked for, it is found with suspicious regularity in the fourth, not in the third foot (except in 24), and once at the end of the third (15). But it may reasonably be doubted if the writer was conscious of these divisions. One cannot mitigate the hiatuses by using caesural pauses as a justification; only in 15, hardly in 23, possibly in 24, does the hiatus come before the caesural pause—if indeed there be such a pause. Nor do I see any necessity of attempting to mitigate the hiatuses by other means: several of them resist any efforts to soften them by crasis; should we not leave them all as they stand?

These lines are, therefore, to my mind, iambic senarii such as are familiar to us in Roman comedy. They are cruder in respect of hiatus and caesural pause and, possibly, resolved feet. They are very likely the *versus inconditi* of a poetaster, a friend of Tryphon, the weaver, living in Egypt in the first century A. D. Have they any further significance? As the product of a local amateur they should interest the student of metric, for they may be of significance in the history of the development of verse form. Such a detail as the identity of sentence and verse is not unimportant. But we know too little positively of the author to use the material before us. Was he a friend of Tryphon, the weaver? Was he a Roman, or in any way subject to Roman influence? If he was a Greek, removed from Roman influence, and if his verse is such verse as had been written in Greek by amateurs two or three centuries before his time, or even by artists of a type somewhat inferior to the writers of the New Comedy, these verses might be of great significance to a student of the comic senarii in Plautus and Terence. From the Erotic Fragment, known as "The Maid's Lament," we have learned to understand better the *cantica* of Plautus; if such verses as these in our papyrus, only perhaps less crude in respect of hiatus, but characterized by the free handling of the even feet, existed in Greek three centuries earlier than our fragment, we might have to revise our theory that the senarius of Latin comedy is a *Roman* adaptation of Menander's

trimeter. As yet, however, we have simply *versus inconditi* of a local poetaster of the first century A. D. who has allowed himself the freedom in the even feet of his senarii that we at present recognize to be the special feature that distinguishes the Latin verse from its Greek congener.¹

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

November 26, 1909

¹The unintelligible part of the fragment contains a few ends of verses that must be taken into account. Of these *καλλονην* (4), *αλεκτορα μου δυναμεθα* (9), *εκ περιπατου* (10) do not conflict with my metrical scheme. *εν τη[ι ο]δωι* (5) is quite uncertain. *και πολλα [. . .]ρων* (8) is also uncertain, but the suggestion *και πολλα [στε]ρων* would not necessarily interfere with my theory. The papyrus is said to be in the possession of Yale University.